


delay. Section 20.11 of the Manual for Complex Litigation suggests that “[a]ll related civil cases pending in the same court should initially be assigned to a single judge to determine whether consolidation, or at least coordination of pretrial proceedings, is feasible and is likely to reduce conflicts and duplication.” Here, plaintiffs do not seek consolidation of the two cases but rather that the same judge preside over them both for coordination purposes, which they claim would increase efficiency, prevent duplicative discovery, preserve resources, and prevent inconsistent pretrial rulings. They presumed that this case would be directly assigned to the judge presiding over *Joy* given that they informed the Court upon filing the instant case that the two cases were related.

Local Rule 4.03, which is based on Federal Rule 42, provides that “[a] party desiring the consolidation of related cases shall file a motion in the case bearing the lowest cause number.” While plaintiffs contend that they do not seek consolidation, transfer of the case for coordination as they describe would nevertheless impose similar responsibilities on the presiding judge – that is, to oversee and coordinate the proceedings in both cases to *inter alia* prevent duplicative discovery and inconsistent pretrial rulings. Those similarities, as well as plaintiffs’ invocation of Rule 42(a) itself, bring plaintiffs’ motion to transfer within the spirit of Local Rule 4.03. Plaintiffs must therefore file their motion in the case bearing the lowest number and file a notice of that motion in each related case. The judge presiding

over the lowest-numbered case will rule the motion.

Accordingly,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that plaintiffs' Motion to Transfer [8] is **DENIED without prejudice** to be refiled in the lowest-numbered case in accordance with Local Rule 4.03 of this Court.


CATHERINE D. PERRY
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

Dated this 4th day of March, 2024.